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EGOS: short paper

Sub-theme 43: The Power of Language(s): A Linguistic Perspective on Organizational Realities

TITLE:

Managing the carnival: translating translation into monologue in bureaucratic institutional framework

*[...] Singing and dancing crowds, ever increasing in number,
moved from place to place under this same Dionysian impulse....
There are people who, from the lack of experience or thick-headedness,
turn away from such manifestations as from “folk-diseases,”
mocking or with pity derived from their own sense
of a superior health. But of course these poor people
have no idea how corpse-like and ghostly their so-called
“health” looks when the glowing life
of the Dionysian swarm buzzes past them.*

Nietzsche, F. *The Birth of Tragedy*

Abstract

In this study two strands of theoretical reflection will contribute to the framework for the analysis of empirical narrative-based material. Research is focused on exploring the reality-framing aspects of the work of translators in a highly centralized, bureaucratic international institution through: approaching their workplace activity via theoretical insights regarding the nature of translation (1); exploring the experiential framework of their professional [and to some extent private] life (2); and analyzing the materiality of the workplace itself to gain insight into the networked processes (3). These research paths will be informed by Derridian and Benjaminian insights into the philosophy of translation; existent literature on emotional labour, sanitization and carnival; and sociomaterial analysis, respectively. The above framework will enable to critically explore the qualitative data gathered for this study and offer a re-conceptualization of translation as a heterogonous notion encompassing multiple practices underpinned by potentially incommensurable set of assumptions including the nature of communication and social interaction.

Preliminary exploration of 3 research themes

While the issue of managed emotion in organizational life has been extensively studied (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1989; Johansson and Naslund, 2009), the potential interaction between multifaceted control of organizational framework and the (allegedly) creative nature of occupation, such as translation, remains underexplored. The following study will inform the